

### Lower Common Neighborhood Conservation District Property Owner's Survey - March, 2006

The Lower Common Neighborhood Conservation District Study Committee has been working since March 2005 on a study of the desirability of designating the Lower Common neighborhood as a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD), joining the five other districts established in Cambridge since 1984. Cambridge ordinances describe an NCD as an "area containing places and structures... of importance to the architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City, and which considered together cause such area to constitute a distinctive neighborhood or to have a distinctive character in terms of its exterior features." In an NCD, many publicly visible exterior alterations and additions to buildings, new fences, and demolition are subject to review by a commission appointed by the City Manager. A list of properties in the study area can be found at [http://www.cambridgema.gov/Historic/lowercommon\\_streetlist.pdf](http://www.cambridgema.gov/Historic/lowercommon_streetlist.pdf).

The Committee has not yet voted on what aspects of exterior alterations, additions, new structures, and demolition visible from a public way should be reviewed or what authority an NCD commission should have to review them. Please take a moment to tell us your opinions about the neighborhood's character and conservation issues. **Please return the survey as soon as possible, but no later than March 20.** Thank you!

1. Possible Areas of Focus in a future Lower Common NCD. *Please indicate how important EACH of the following are to you: 3 = Most Important, 2 = Important, 1 = Not Important*

\_\_\_\_\_preserve the neighborhood's four pre-1842 houses (35 Bowdoin and 26 Gray streets, 46 Hudson Place, and 1 Potter Park) by reviewing all alterations visible from a public way

\_\_\_\_\_conserve the visual unity of double houses and row houses by reviewing alterations that would materially diminish their identity as such

\_\_\_\_\_conserve the open character of front porches and verandas by reviewing proposed enclosures while being sympathetic to those that preserve their architectural character

\_\_\_\_\_conserve the traditional scale of dormers and roofs by reviewing new dormers and encouraging dormers that replicate the materials, detailing, and fenestration of the main house and conform to the Board of Zoning Appeal guidelines:  
<http://www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/cp/zng/desguide.html>

\_\_\_\_\_conserve the traditional scale and appearance of windows by requiring that replacement window sash match the appearance of historic sash and conform to stated standards

\_\_\_\_\_conserve public views of buildings and yards by reviewing front yard fences over 4' tall and other fences over 6' tall.

\_\_\_\_\_discourage parking in front yards

\_\_\_\_\_conserve distinctive features of apartment houses by protecting windows, fencing, parapets and the like, while allowing less-costly substitute materials if they substantially match the appearance of the originals

\_\_\_\_\_provide a sunset clause to require reauthorization of an NCD order after 5 years

2. NCDs can provide for reviews that are either BINDING (i.e., the Commission's determination is binding on the applicant) or ADVISORY (i.e., an appearance before the Commission is required, but the determination does not bind the applicant to the Commission's decision). *Please use a checkmark to respond to the following.*

Review of **additions** to structures should be Advisory only ☐ Binding ☐

Review of **alterations** to structures should be Advisory only ☐ Binding ☐

Review of **demolition** of a structure should be Advisory only ☐ Binding ☐

Review of **new structures** should be Advisory only ☐ Binding ☐

3. The Committee has recommended the inclusion of the apartment houses on Chauncy and the north side of Linnaean streets in the Lower Common NCD. Do you agree?

Check Yes ☐, No ☐, or Don't know ☐.

4. Do you have any thoughts or comments for the Committee's consideration?

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5. In general, I \_\_\_\_\_ support \_\_\_\_\_ oppose the designation of a Lower Common NCD, because:

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6. I am: a property owner ☐ a tenant ☐

**To return this Survey, fold the paper so the "Cambridge Historical Commission" address is on the front, seal, and affix postage.**

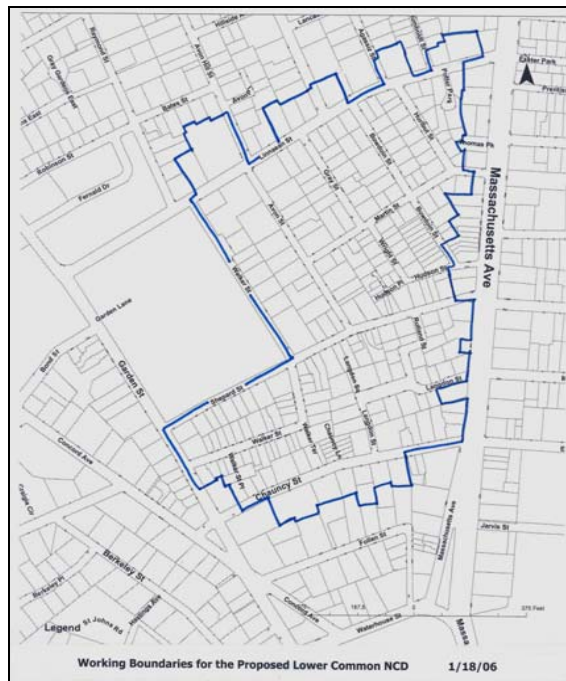
Lower Common Study Committee: Jacob Albert, Wyllis Bibbins, Dennis Carlone, Robert Hunt, William King, Peggy Kutcher, Maurice Lesses

*Need more information? Call the Cambridge Historical Commission 617 349 4683 or go on line:*  
[http://www.cambridgema.gov/Historic/lowercommon\\_study.html](http://www.cambridgema.gov/Historic/lowercommon_study.html)

Please come to our remaining meetings. The Committee hopes to conclude its work on April 26 with a recommendation whether or not to proceed with

the proposed district, and, if so, what form it should take. If the Committee makes a favorable finding, the Cambridge Historical Commission will hold a public hearing before sending its own recommendation to the City Council.

The Study Committee will meet at the Harvard-Epworth United Methodist Church, 1555 Mass. Ave. from 5:30 to 7:00 on the following Wednesday evenings: March 15, March 29, April 5, April 26. Please go to the door on the right side of the church and push the Front Parlor buzzer for entry.



4/7/06